



17.

## By the King.

### A PROCLAMATION

For Enforcing the due Execution of the Act of Parliament, Entituled, *An Act for Settling the Profits of the Post-Office on His Royal Highness the Duke of York, and His Heirs Males, and for Prevention of Treasonable Correspondencies*, and other Inconveniences arising by the Infringement of the said Act.

CHARLES R.



Whereas the Office of Post-Master General hath been Erected by Act of Parliament, in the Twelfth Year of his Majesties Reign, and the Well Ordering thereof is thereby Declared to be a matter of general concernment, and of great advantage, as well for Preservat on of Trade and Commerce, as otherwise; And Whereas also the greatest part of the Revenue and Profits thereby arising, is by one other Act of Parliament in the fifteenth Year of his Majesties Reign, Granted and Assigned by His Majesty unto his most entirely beloved Brother, James Duke of York, for and towards his Maintenance and Support; Which Laws and Statutes notwithstanding, several persons for their private Lucre have lately practised, and do still continue in a secret and most unlawful manner to make a general Collection of Letters, and to give them Conveyance and Delivery for Hire, without any Authority

from the Post-Master General, whereby not only the Revenue arising by the said Office is diminished, but likewise several dangerous Correspondencies are maintained, and the Seditious Designs of many evil disposed persons, and the Treasons of the late Conspirators are very much promoted: His Majesty therefore, for the prevention hereof in time to come, and to the end that such persons who shall presume hereafter to offend in like manner, may remain without all excuse, hath thought fit by this his Royal Proclamation to Require and Enjoyn all his Loving Subjects, and doth hereby strictly Charge and

Command all and every Person and Persons (other then the Post-Master General for the time being, his Deputies or Assigns) That they presume not, either directly or indirectly, to set up any Office, or to Contrive or Practise any Way or means for Collecting and Receiving of Letters and Pacquets, or to Carry, Recarry, or Deliver the same With Speed and for Hire: And to this end his Majesty doth further Require and Command them and every of them, That they presume not to set up any Foot-Post, Horse-Post, Post or Stage-Coach, or Pacquet-Boat, for Carrying, or Recarrying of Letters or Pacquets, or to employ or make use of any which shall be set up for that purpose, other then such as shall be Licensed and Authorized by the Post-Master General for the time being, his Deputies or Assigns. And because several Carriers, Drivers of Stage-Coaches, or Waggons, Haglers, Masters of Ships, Pur-sers, or other Mariners, do very often under colour and pretence of their respective Employments, intermeddle with, and intrude upon the Office of the Post-master General; His Majesty doth hereby more particularly and expressly Charge and Command all Carriers, That they presume not to Carry any Letters other then such as shall concern the Goods Wherewith they are Charged, beyond the first Post-Stage to which they shall arrive, and that they presume not to outgo their Packs or Waggons, or deliver any Letters which they carry, sooner, or with more speed then their respective Packs or Waggons shall arrive. And his Majesty doth in like manner Charge and Command all Drivers of Stage-Coaches, Haglers, and such like Persons, That they presume not in any kind, or upon any pretence

certain local Carriers, Drivers of Stage-Coaches, or Waggons, Haglers, Masters of Ships, Pur-sers, or other Mariners, do very often under colour and pretence of their respective Employments, intermeddle with, and intrude upon the Office of the Post-master General; His Majesty doth hereby more particularly and expressly Charge and Command all Carriers, That they presume not to Carry any Letters other then such as shall concern the Goods wherewith they are Charged, beyond the first Post-Stage to which they shall arrive, and that they presume not to outgo their Packs or Waggons, or deliver any Letters which they carry, sooner, or with more speed then their respective Packs or Waggons shall arrive. And His Majesty doth in like manner Charge and Command all Drivers of Stage-Coaches, Haglers, and such like Persons, That they presume not in any kind, or upon any pretence whatsoever to intermeddle with the Conveyance and Delivery of any Letters as aforesaid; But that they do from time to time refuse all such Letters which shall be so tendered to them. And His Majesty doth also Charge and Command all Masters of Ships, Pur-sers and Mariners, That they presume not to carry any Ship-Letters, other then the Letters of Merchants, Owners and Masters, beyond the first Post-Stage to which they shall arrive in England. And if any Carriers, Drivers of Stage-Coaches, Haglers, Masters of Ships, Pur-sers, or other Mariners, shall be found Carrying of Letters unlawfully, or in any other manner, they shall incur His Majesties high Displeasure, and suffer the utmost penalty which can be Inflicted upon such as shall be found to have broken His Majesties Laws, and to be Wilful Contemners of his Royal Command; And moreover all Letters whatsoever Sent or Conveyed by such Clandestine and Indirect Ways, and by Persons not lawfully Authorized, shall be lookt upon as Letters of Dangerous Consequence, and shall accordingly be Seized and brought to one of His Majesties Principal Secretaries of State, or to some one or more of the Lords of His Majesties most Honourable Privy Council, to the end the same may be opened and inspected, and the persons conveying or sending them may be proceeded against according to Law. And for the better Execution of His Majesties Command, and as a means as well to prevent the said Treasonable Correspondencies, and other inconveniences, as to Secure the Revenue arising by the said Office, His Majesty will cause such Searchers, Waiters, and other Officers to be appointed in all convenient Places, as may be fit and proper for the Discovery of such Practices, and carrying such Letters to be Seized, and such Offenders Names to be certified. And in the mean time His Majesty doth strictly Charge and Command all Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, Constables, Bayliffs, Searchers of his Majesties Ports, and all other his Officers and Ministers whatsoever Within their several Jurisdictions and Offices, from time to time to make diligent Search for all Mailes, Buggets, and Baggs in any Ship, Vessel, Waggon, Coach, or other Unlawful or Unlicensed Carriage; And all such Letters which they find to be conveyed or carried contrary to Law, to Seize and send up to one of His Majesties Principal Secretaries of State, or to some or more of the Lords of His Majesties Privy Council, together with the Names of the Persons Offending, to the end such further Proceeding may be had, as shall be found agreeable to the Laws and Statutes of the Realm. And that no man hereafter may complain for want of a Settled Post in or near particular By-Towns, or Places lying on the Post Road, which Complaint hath hitherto been made the excuse or pretence for sending and carrying of Letters by other indirect and unlawful Conveyances: His Majesty doth hereby also Require and Command the Post-Master General for the time being, That upon or before the Fourteenth day of September next, to take effectual care for the Conveyance of all By-Letters, by Establishing Correspondencies at the least Charge, and greatest easie that may be to the Country, in all considerable Market-Towns With the next adjacent Post-Stage; And that he cause a Map or Card thereof to be forthwith Printed, to the end that all His Majesties Subjects may know Where, and to what Place to address their respective Letters. And His Majesty doth further Charge and Command all and every Person or Persons other then the Post-Master General for the time being, his Deputies or Assigns, That they presume not to prepare or provide any Horses or Furniture to let to hire unto, or in all or any the Through Posts, and Persons Riding Post by Commission, or Without, to and from all and every the Parts and Places of England, Scotland, and Ireland, Where any Post-Roads are or shall be Settled and Established, unless the Post-Master General, his Deputies or Assigns, shall first fail to Provide and furnish the Person or Persons so Riding Post with sufficient Horses and Furniture, Within the space of half an hour after Demand thereof made, as they will answer the contrary at their Perils.

Given at Our Court at Windsor the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1683. In the Five and thirtieth Year of Our Reign.

God save the King.

L O N D O N

Printed by the Assigns of John Bill Deceas'd: And by Henry Hills, and Thomas Newcomb,  
Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majestie.